

## II. REMARKS

### Preliminary Remarks:

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 17, 23, 50, and 51 will be pending of which claim 17 is independent. Claims 1-5, 7-9, 11, 12, 15, and 18 are canceled. Claims 6, 10, 13-14, 16, 19-22, and 24-49 are withdrawn as being directed to a non-elected invention. Claims 17 and 23 are amended. Claim 17 is amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 18, while support for the amendments to claim 23 can be found in the specification as filed (see, for example, Figure 27 in conjunction with Figure 20C). Claims 50 and 51 are new. Support for the new claims can also be found in the specification as filed (see, for example, Figure 7; paragraphs 0064, 0065, 0067, and 0068).

Paragraphs 0003 and 00171 of the specification are amended to correct inadvertent and obvious errors. In paragraph 0003, the formula for  $\text{SiO}_4$  did not have the "4" subscripted. In paragraph 00171, the relationship between  $T$  and  $\pi (R^2L - r^2l)/4Q$  was incorrectly indicated as  $T = \pi (R^2L - r^2l)/4Q$ , when it should be  $T \geq \pi (R^2L - r^2l)/4Q$ . Therefore, the applicants believe that no new matter has been added as a result of these amendments.

The applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the present application. This amendment is filed within the statutory period for response along with the fee for a three-month extension of time.

### Patentability Remarks:

#### *Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph –*

Claims 15 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §122, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. This rejection is moot in view of the amendments to the claims.

Claim 15 is canceled. As amended, claim 23 is directed to, *inter alia*, maintaining the bar material at a particular point from a sintering area for a predetermined time period, after the temperature of the sintering area reaches a sintering temperature, and the starting the sintering process. Therefore, claim 23 is not indefinite and the applicants respectfully request removal of this rejection.

*Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) –*

Claims 1-3, 5, 9, and 11-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by JP 62-153135. These claims are canceled rendering this rejection moot.

Claims 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Tsuchiya *et al.* (U.S. Pat. No. 5,624,474). This rejection is moot in view of the amendments to the claims.

Claim 18 is canceled. As amended, claim 17 is directed to, *inter alia*, a method for manufacturing a base material for an optical fiber comprising the steps of: holding a bar material by a support member constituted as one unit and making a swing suppressing mechanism contact with the support member in a perpendicular direction to the axis of the support member. In contrast, Tsuchiya *et al.* disclose bearings 56 surrounding a rotating shaft 50 connected to a rod 38 by a chuck 36 (see Figure 4 in connection with Figure 2 in Tsuchiya *et al.*). The other end of the rod 38 is connected to a starting rod 44 serving as a starting point of the growth of the preform. Thus, the bearings 56 do not make contact with the starting rod 44. Furthermore, the rod 38 is not constituted as a single unit. Therefore, claim 17 is not anticipated by Tsuchiya *et al.* and the applicants respectfully request removal of this rejection.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Akaike (U.S. Pat. No. 5,401,290). This claim is canceled rendering this rejection moot.

*Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) –*

Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Akaike. This claim is canceled rendering this rejection moot.

Claim 23 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Tsuchiya *et al.* This rejection is moot in view of the amendments to this claim.

Claim 23 is dependent on claim 17, which the applicants already argued is not anticipated by Tsuchiya *et al.* (*supra*). Tsuchiya *et al.* does not teach or suggest a method for manufacturing a base material for an optical fiber, comprising the steps of: (1) holding a bar material, which the base material is deposited, by a support member constituted as one unit; (2) making a swing suppressing mechanism contact with the support member in a perpendicular direction to the axis of the support member; (3) rotating the bar material as a unit with the support member, wherein the swing suppression mechanism regulates a movement of the unit of the bar material and the support member, the movement being

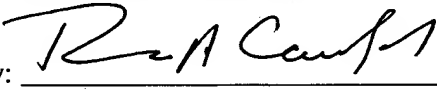
perpendicular to a direction of a rotation axis of the unit of the bar material and the support member; (4) maintaining the bar material at a particular point distant from a sintering area until a predetermined time period is passed after the temperature of the sintering area reaches a sintering temperature; and (5) starting a sintering process in the sintering area. Therefore, claim 23 is not unpatentable over Tsuchiya *et al.* and the applicants respectfully request removal of this rejection.

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over JP 62-153135 in view of Chervenak *et al.* (U.S. Pat. No. 5,558,692). This claim is canceled rendering this rejection moot.

The applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request a timely Notice to that effect. Should questions relating to patentability remain, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to discuss the same.

Respectfully submitted,

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